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ABSTRACT

Results of the third survey of Philadelphia Public High School dropouts were obtained from 1629 respondents. Questionnaires, in postcard form, were mailed in September 1976 to all the 1975-1976 dropouts listed in the pupil directory file. Respondents answered the following questions: (1) Are you working? (2) Are you unemployed? (3) Are you looking for work? (4) Are you back in school now? (5) Are you in the armed forces? (6) What were your reasons for leaving school? (7) With whom did you talk about leaving school? This summary brochure reports all survey statistics; some statistical comparisons between dropouts and graduates; and conclusions drawn from a number of unsolicited comments from the respondents. This brochure also includes a sample questionnaire form which can be used by, or serve as a model for, other school districts seeking information about their dropout populations and high school programs. (Author/RF)

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HIGH SCHOOL DROP-OUTS

HIGHLIGHT RESULTS OF A SURVEY OF PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS WHO LEFT SCHOOL IN 1975/76

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QUESTIONS FOR

DROP-OUTS

ARE YOU WORKING?

ARE YOU UNEMPLOYED?

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR WORK?

ARE YOU BACK IN SCHOOL NOW?

ARE YOU IN THE ARMED FORCES?

WHAT WERE YOUR REASONS FOR LEAVING SCHOOL?

WITH WHOM DID YOU TALK ABOUT LEAVING SCHOOL?

THESE RESULTS
OF THE THIRD SURVEY
OF PHILADELPHIA
PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL
DROPOUTS
WERE OBTAINED
FROM 1,629 RESPONDENTS

QUESTIONNAIRES
WERE MAILED
IN SEPTEMBER 1976
TO ALL
THE 1975-76
DROPOUTS LISTED
IN THE
PUPIL DIRECTORY
FILE

OF THE 1,629 RESPONDENTS AS OF OCTOBER 1976

21% WERE WORKING AND NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL

6% WERE WORKING AND ATTENDING SCHOOL

46% WERE UNEMPLOYED

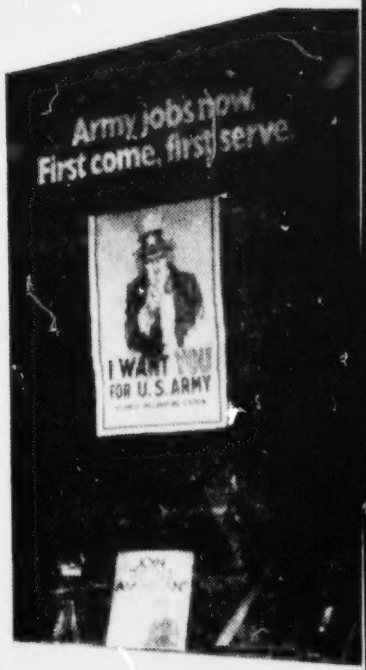
86% OF THE UNEMPLOYED WERE LOOKING FOR WORK

14% WERE NOT WORKING AND NOT LOOKING FOR WORK (DISCOURAGED WORKERS, HOMEMAKERS)

26% WERE BACK IN SOME EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

7% WERE IN THE ARMED FORCES

OF THE 436 EMPLOYED RESPONDENTS



37% OF THE RESPONDENTS WHO WERE WORKING HELD UNSKILLED JOBS

AN ADDITIONAL 14% WERE IN SERVICE OCCUPATIONS (WAITRESSES, GUARDS, ETC.)

CRAFTSMEN AND OPERATORS, INCLUDING APPRENTICES CONSTITUTED 5% OF THE TOTAL

11% WORKED IN OFFICE JOBS

A DIFFERENCE IN HOURLY EARNINGS WAS REPORTED BETWEEN BLACKS ($2.42) AND WHITES ($2.66)

A DIFFERENCE IN HOURLY EARNINGS ALSO EXISTED BETWEEN MALES ($2.63) AND FEMALES ($2.38)

OF THE 745 UNEMPLOYED RESPONDENTS WHO WERE LOOKING FOR WORK

8% WANTED OFFICE WORK

9% WANTED WORK IN HEALTH SERVICES

13% WANTED JOBS IN SERVICE OCCUPATIONS (I.E., TEACHER AIDES, NURSES AIDES AND NON-TEACHING ASSISTANTS

35% WANTED ANY KIND OF JOB

OF THE 423 RESPONDENTS IN SCHOOLS

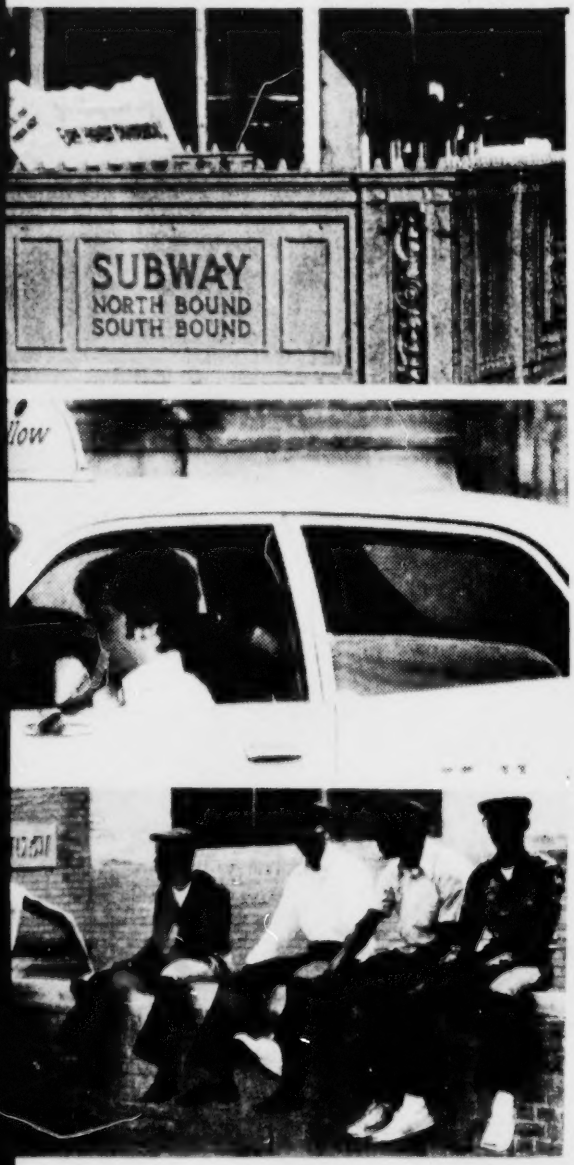
24% WERE EMPLOYED

31% WERE ATTENDING PHILADELPHIA STANDARD EVENING HIGH SCHOOLS

35% WERE RE-ENROLLED IN PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL

14% WERE IN TECHNICAL AND NURSING SCHOOLS

6% WERE IN FEDERAL PROGRAMS



WHY DID YOU LEAVE SCHOOL?

11%	RETAINED IN GRADE
13	NEEDED OR GOT A JOB
19	PREGNANCY, MARRIAGE OR BABY CARE
13	PERSONAL OR HOME PROBLEMS
20	FOUND SCHOOL "BORING AND A HASSLE"
6	POOR ATTENDANCE "GOT PUT OUT"
3	ILLNESS
3	"QUIT — WASN'T LEARNING"
3	GOVERNMENT SERVICE (JOB CORPS — ARMED SERVICES, ETC.)
3	LEFT TO GO TO ANOTHER SCHOOL
2	"GANGS"
2	DESIRED COURSES NOT AVAILABLE
2	OTHER
100%	

WITH WHOM DID YOU TALK ABOUT LEAVING SCHOOL?

Almost 40% of the respondents said they spoke to no one about their decision to leave school. One fifth of the respondents consulted only their families.
Dropouts seem to be a more mobile group than graduates (twice as many dropout as graduate questionnaires were unable to be delivered by the Postal Service).

THE DROPOUTS 1975-1976
THE GRADUATES 1975 HIGHLIGHTS

	1975-76 DROPOUTS	1975 GRADUATES
EMPLOYED (EXCLUSIVELY)	21%	26%
MEDIAN HOURLY WAGE	$2.50	$2.49
UNEMPLOYED — LOOKING FOR WORK	46%	12%
MILITARY SERVICE	7	3
IN SCHOOL OR COLLEGE	26	59
BLACK	67	55
NON-BLACK	33	45
MALE	56	46
FEMALE	44	54

THE QUESTIONNAIRE . . . A SIMPLE POST CARD

Comments on the response forms indicate that perhaps, as a group, dropouts are less kindly disposed toward the Philadelphia Public School System. Nonetheless, this group of dropouts responded to the survey at a rate sufficient to yield an adequate number of responses for analysis purposes. The responses were representative of the group contacted by race and sex.

PLEASE COMPLETE, TEAR OFF, AND MAIL IMMEDIATELY. THANK YOU.

1. Are you working now? Full time ☐ Part time ☐
2. Type of work: (circle number that applies)
   - Office and secretarial 1
   - Sales 2
   - Craftsman/operator 3
   - Data processing/keypunch 4
   - Services—teacher aide, waiter 5
   - Health Services 6
   - Technical/Trade 7
   - Unskilled labor 8
   - Other (specify) _____
3. Wages $_____ hour.
4. Are you unemployed? Yes ☐ No ☐
5. Are you looking for work? Yes ☐ No ☐
6. If yes, what kind?

   _____
7. If you are not working now, have you had a job since leaving high school? Yes ☐ No ☐
8. With whom did you talk about leaving school?
   Counselor ☐ Teacher ☐ Principal/vice principal ☐
   Friends ☐ Family ☐ No one ☐ Other ☐
9. Why did you leave school before graduating?

   _____
10. Are you going to school now? Yes ☐ No ☐
11. School: (circle number that applies)
    - Standard Evening High School 1
    - Philadelphia Public High School 2
    - Business/Secretarial 3
    - Private High School 4
    - Technical/Trade 5
    - Nursing 6
    - College 7
    - Other (specify) _____
12. Course: (circle number that applies)
    GED . . . . . 1 Technical/Trade 2
    Business/Secretarial . . 3 College 4
    Other:

    _____

The person to whom this is addressed is in the armed forces. ☐

CONCLUSIONS

A number of unsolicited comments from the respondents indicated an awareness that they had "messed things up" by dropping out. Although most had been retained in grade one or more times, some dropouts wanted help in returning to school. These respondents were referred to Pupil Personnel and Counseling and home and school visitors contacted each of them and advised them of their options in this matter. Many expressed thanks for our interest in them.

The reasons for dismissal coded on the individual school records differ considerably from the reasons given by the dropouts in this survey. Although school records show that 36% of the dropouts had left school to go to work, the survey found that many of them left because they were dissatisfied with their progress in school. Among the respondents whose records show they left school in order to go to work, 12% reported that their reason for leaving school was that they were retained in grade. An additional 20% of this group said that they left school because it was "boring and a hassle." Only 13% of the survey respondents stated that they left school to go to work. Future surveys will continue to gather data on our students who leave school before graduation. This information should provide a firm base from which administrators on all levels may make meaningful assessments of the high school programs.

	1973-74 DROPOUTS	1974-75 DROPOUTS	1975-76 DROPOUTS
EMPLOYED (EXCLUSIVELY)	28%	22%	21%
MEDIAN HOURLY WAGE	$2.21	$2.47	$2.50
UNEMPLOYED — LOOKING FOR WORK	35%	42%	46%
MILITARY SERVICE	13	9	7
IN SCHOOL OR COLLEGE	16	20	26

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Division of Administrative and Survey Research Services

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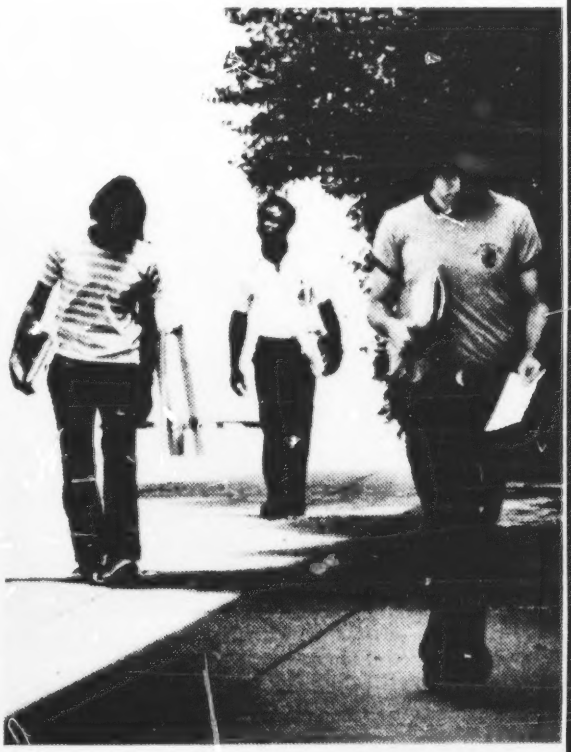
Copies of both this summary brochure and a more detailed report are available from the Office of Informational Services, 299-7850.



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